Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Site Number: 18FR327 **Site Name:** Catoctin Race Pond

Other name(s) Orr's "Check 11"; Locust Pond

Prehistoric ☐ Historic ☑ Unknown ☐

Brief Description: early 19th to early 20th century race pond

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 39.5833 Longitude -77.4332

Elevation m Site slope

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 17

Physiographic province Blue Ridge

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

SCS soil & sediment code Ma

Terrestrial site ☑ Underwater site ☐

Topography

Floodplain	☐	High terrace	☐
Hilltop/bluff	☐	Rockshelter/ cave	☐
Interior flat	☐	Hillslope	☐
Upland flat	☐	Unknown	☐
Ridgetop	☐	Other	☐
Terrace	☐		
Low terrace	☑		

Ownership

Private	☐
Federal	☐
State of MD	☑
Regional/ county/city	☐
Unknown	☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Little Hunting Creek

Saltwater		Freshwater	
Ocean	☐	Stream/river	☑
Estuary/tidal river	☐	Swamp	☐
Tidewater/marsh	☐	Lake or pond	☐
		Spring	☐

Minimum distance to water is 25 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site		Woodland site		Contact period site	
Archaic site		MD Adena		ca. 1630 - 1675	
Early archaic		Early woodland		ca. 1675 - 1720	
MIddle archaic		Mid. woodland		ca. 1720 - 1780	
Late archaic		Late woodland		ca. 1780 - 1820	
Unknown prehistoric context				Unknown historic context	
				Unknown context	

ca. 1820 - 1860	Y
ca. 1860 - 1900	Y
ca. 1900 - 1930	Y
Post 1930	

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American		Asian American	
African American		Unknown	Y
Anglo-American		Other	
Hispanic			

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component	☐	Misc. ceremonial	☐
Village	☐	Rock art	☐
Hamlet	☐	Shell midden	☐
Base camp	☐	STU/lithic scatter	☐
Rockshelter/cave	☐	Quarry/extraction	☐
Earthen mound	☐	Fish weir	☐
Cairn	☐	Production area	☐
Burial area	☐	Unknown	☐

Other context ☐

Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural

Domestic	☐	Furnace/forge	☐	**Military**	☐
Homestead	☐	Other	☐	Battlefield	☐
Farmstead	☐	**Transportation**	☐	Fortification	☐
Mansion	☐	Canal-related	☐	Encampment	☐
Plantation	☐	Road/railroad	☐	**Townsite**	☐
Row/townhome	☐	Wharf/landing	☐	**Religious**	☐
Cellar	☐	Maritime-related	☐	Church/mtg house	☐
Privy	☐	Bridge	☐	Ch support bldg	☐
Industrial	☑	Ford	☐	**Burial area**	☐
Mining-related	☑	**Educational**	☐	Cemetery	☐
Quarry-related	☐	**Commercial**	☐	Sepulchre	☐
Mill	☐	Trading post	☐	Isolated burial	☐
Black/metalsmith	☐	Store	☐	**Bldg or foundation**	☐
		Tavern/inn	☐	Possible Structure	☐

Post-in-ground	☐
Frame-built	☐
Masonry	☐
Other structure	☐
Slave related	☐
Non-domestic agri	☐
Recreational	☐
Midden/dump	☑
Artifact scatter	☐
Spring or well	☑
Unknown	☐
Other context	☑

race pond

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples			
Soil samples taken			
Flotation samples taken		Other samples taken	

Historic context samples			
Soil samples taken	N		
Flotation samples taken	N	Other samples taken	

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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types

Clovis		Koens-Crispin	
Hardaway-Dalton		Perkiomen	
Palmer		Susquehana	
Kirk (notch)		Vernon	
Kirk (stem)		Piscataway	
Le Croy		Calvert	
Morrow Mntn		Selby Bay	
Guilford		Jacks Rf (notch)	
Brewerton		Jacks Rf (pent)	
Otter Creek		Madison/Potomac	
		Levanna	

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek		Popes Creek		Shepard		Keyser	
Dames Qtr		Coulbourn		Townsend		Yeocomico	
Selden Island		Watson		Minguannan		Monongahela	
Accokeek		Mockley		Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	
Wolfe Neck		Clemson Island		Shenks Ferry			
Vinette		Page		Moyaone			
				Potomac Cr			

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone		Staffordshire		**Stoneware**	
Astbury		Jackfield		Tin Glazed		English Brown	
Borderware		Mn Mottled		Whiteware	16	Eng Dry-bodie	
Buckley		North Devon		**Porcelain**	1	Nottingham	
Creamware		Pearlware	2			Rhenish	
						Wt Salt-glazed	

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts

Flaked stone		Other fired clay	
Ground stone		Human remain(s)	☐
Stone bowls		Modified faunal	
Fire-cracked rock		Unmod faunal	
Other lithics (all)		Oyster shell	☐
Ceramics (all)		Floral material	☐
Rimsherds		Uncommon Obj.	
		Other ☐	

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)		Storage/trash pit	☐
Midden	☐	Burial(s)	☐
Shell midden	☐	Ossuary	☐
Postholes/molds	☐	Unknown	☐
House pattern(s)	☐	Other	☐
Palisade(s)	☐		
Hearth(s)	☐		
Lithic reduc area	☐		

Lithic Material

Fer quartzite	☐	Sil sandstone	☐		
Jasper	☐	Chalcedony	☐	European flint	☐
Chert	☐	Ironstone	☐	Basalt	☐
Rhyolite	☐	Argilite	☐	Unknown	☐
Quartz	☐	Steatite	☐	Other	☐
Quartzite	☐	Sandstone	☐		

☐ **Dated features present at site**

Historic Artifacts

		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	67	Activity item(s)	4
Glass (all)	15	Human remain(s)	☐
Architectural	23	Faunal material	☐
Furniture		Misc. kitchen	1
Arms		Floral material	☑
Clothing		Misc.	124
Personal items		Other ☐	

Historic Features

Const feature	☐	Privy/outhouse	☐	Depression/mound	☐
Foundation	☐	Well/cistern	☐	Burial(s)	☐
Cellar hole/cellar	☐	Trash pit/dump	☐	Railroad bed	☐
Hearth/chimney	☐	Sheet midden	☐	Earthworks	☐
Postholes/molds	☐	Planting feature	☐	Mill raceway	☑
Paling ditch/fence	☐	Road/walkway	☐	Wheel pit	☐

Unknown	☐	
Other	☑	race pond

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 2:** +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 3:** +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 4: +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 5:** +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 6:** +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 7: +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 8:** +/- years BP Reliability **Sample 9:** +/- years BP Reliability

☐ **Additional radiocarbon results available**

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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18FR327 is a small pond, the remnant of what was known locally as Locust Pond, 2/3 of which was covered by the original (now southbound) lane of US Route 15. The site is located north of the Catoctin Furnace Historic District, along US Route 15 in Frederick County, Maryland. The pond was used for ore washing, and provided water power to run the forge hammers, grist and saw mills, and the water wheels used to power bellows for the iron smelting furnaces at Catoctin. The pond is supplied by a spring and groundwater, and is drained via a berm ditch to a nearby creek built by SHA when the pond was reduced in the early 1960s. It is evident that historically an intake ditch from the creek to the north supplied additional water (thus increasing the size of the pond), while a raceway trough at one time led from the pond's southeast corner to the Catoctin Furnaces and beyond. The site was also used for recreation (fishing and skating) and raising goldfish over periods of its history.

The racepond was first examined by archeologists in 1977 during a Phase I survey through the Catoctin Furnace Historic District and environs prior to the dualization of US 15. During the Phase I investigations, the pond area was extensively surveyed on foot and important features were noted and mapped. It was determined that the dualization of the highway would result in the near complete filling in of the remaining pond and the leveling of surrounding features to accommodate the new highway lane. Thus the site would be largely destroyed and warranted Phase II testing. A Phase II research plan was established that involved extensive background research to obtain clues as to how the pond was used over the course of time and its place in the Catoctin Furnace infrastructure, soil sediment coring to determine the subsurface structure under the pond and the succession of plant species in the vicinity, and a series of test trenches to examine presumed pond-related features. A brief overview of the archival and oral history research will be presented first, followed by discussion of the archeology.

Archival research and discussions with local informants reveal important background information relating to the site. In the year 1774, James, Thomas, Baker, and Roger Johnson constructed the first iron furnace at Catoctin. In 1776, they began producing pig iron under the name of James Johnson and Company. Hematite ore from the Catoctin Mountains provided the raw material for production of the iron while the Catoctin forests provided charcoal for fuel. In addition, water from the local springs and streams provided the energy to power enormous bellows blowing air into the furnace, as well as power for forge hammers, mills, and other machines. A complex system of ponds, races, ditches, dams, and aqueducts ensured that the water wheels were supplied with sufficient "drop" to maintain the power levels needed. Site 18FR327 appears to have played a role in that complex water supply system. One of the most important early products of the furnace is rumored to have been supplies (including munitions) for George Washington's Army. While pig iron continued to be produced at the furnace, other important products were machine parts, foundry rolling mills, iron car/cart wheels, cast-iron stoves, and other materials. During the Civil War, iron from the furnace was used to armor the famous iron-clad ship, the Monitor. Over the course of history a number of additional furnace stacks, support structures, quarries, casting areas, and other structures were constructed in the area. Some structures were demolished and improved facilities were built. One noteworthy addition was the construction of the "Isabella" furnace stack around 1856. The Catoctin Furnace continued to operate until the early 20th century.

The initial function and method of construction for the racepond cannot be determined from archival work and interviews. Nor can the original layout of raceways shuttling water to and/or from the pond be determined without archeological work. More detailed information is, however, available for the early 20th century layout and function of the racepond. Interviews with local informants reveal that the pond was primarily spring-fed despite the presence of a relict input raceway on the north bank of the pond which at one time supplied additional water to enlarge the pond. A cement dam and intake valve fed the input raceway from the dammed mill pond at North Little Hunting Creek. These structures were built or at least improved by Lanceolot Jacques, owner and real estate developer of the Catoctin Furnace area during the 1920s. The water was used to create lakes out of nearby abandoned iron mining pits. This complex of lakes was part of Jacques' "deer park" development. It is possible that Jacques did not build the raceway from the creek to the racepond at 18FR327, but merely installed the intake valve and a new dam (a possible replacement) at the head of an already extant furnace-related raceway. The "deer park" was a development scheme by Jacque to make a portion of the furnace area profitable as a recreational area. It seems this idea never really took off, but the facilities did provide an ideal environment for raising fish. Beginning in the late 1920s, the ponds developed by Jacques were rented by one George English who began using them to raise goldfish. According to one local informant, some very large carp goldfish were supplied to the White House to stock pools on the mansion lawn and grounds. This profitable fish farming business was expanded and at one time the area from Catoctin Mountain to Lewistown was known as "the Goldfish Capital of the World". The racepond at 18FR327 was used to raise goldfish during the summer, and drained every fall via a tailrace to the southeast so that the fish could be collected. This tailrace emptied into an old ore mine, which Jacques had converted into another "deer park" pond. The water in this second pond was impounded by a stone barrage on its south side and a second cement dam to the east. In times of flooding, water could spill over this second cement dam into yet another abandoned ore mine. Originally it seems that the water was transported from the racepond at 18FR327 southeast via the tailrace, but instead of spilling into the abandoned ore mines, it was transported over a narrow gap between them by a wooden aqueduct. It then continued in a raceway south towards the furnace facilities.

Oral history also reveals that President Franklin D. Roosevelt used the pond at 18FR327 to catch mountain trout during World War II. The President's personal physicians had suggested that he relax on the weekends away from the humid conditions of Washington DC for his own health. While the President was partial to sailing on his yacht, the Secret Service became increasingly concerned that the vessel would become a target for German U boats off the Atlantic coast. As a safer alternative, a retreat was established on National Park Service property (Catoctin Mountain Park) just a few miles from Catoctin Furnace, which the President called "Shangri-La". Today it is called "Camp David". According to the former caretaker of the fish ponds, when the President was visiting Shangri-La, the racepond at 18FR327 was drained, the goldfish were removed, and the pond was stocked with government hatchery trout for the president. The goldfish were then replaced when the president's catch was completed. The physical layout of the pond changed little from the time of Roosevelt until the early 1960s when the construction of US Route 15 altered the landscape considerably. At this time the size of the pond was reduced considerably, the old raceway from the mill pond on North Little Hunting Creek was apparently filled in, and a berm ditch was dug on the north side of the pond to drain the spring-fed waters of the pond into the creek.

Phase II fieldwork in 1979 consisted primarily of a series of 11 soil core borings in the vicinity of 18FR327 and the excavation of 9 backhoe and hand-excavated trenches. The trenches were irregular in size and shape (depending on ground conditions and topography). Eight were located in the immediate area of the pond and one was excavated to the south in the area where a wooden aqueduct was rumored to have been located (see above). The soil cores indicated that a deep depression in the bedrock underlay the pond, reaching to a depth of 15.24 meters (50 ft). The depression contained fill at a minimum of 5.5-6.7 meters (18-22 ft) below the pond surface. The fill contained evidence of iron ore, iron granules, brick, charcoal, glassy slag, rubble, and wood. It was determined that this depression could not be natural and that it was much deeper than that needed for the efficiency of a racepond. It was interpreted as

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evidence that an ore mine had been excavated and then subsequently refilled with debris. Thus, the racepond at 18FR327, like the ponds to the south created by Jacques, was initially an iron ore mine. Analysis of pollen within the soil cores revealed the presence of “sprouting” tree species which invariably spring up when forests are clear-cut, several flowers associated with open fields, and swamp plant species. The forests surrounding Catoctin furnace are thought to have been clear-cut for lumber approximately every 25-35 years and this evidence seems to support that contention.

The backhoe trenches helped to better define the evolution of the racepond and its uses, and identified the sequence of raceways and other structures that fed water to and carried water away from the pond. Very few artifacts were encountered, but those that were recovered are described below. The findings indicated 8 phases of change at the 18FR327 pond, (1) beginning with the iron ore mine indicated by fill debris in the borings cores. (2) After mining activities were completed the hole filled with water from a nearby spring. (3) Those managing the mines took advantage of the new pond and used it to wash the iron ore now coming out of nearby mines. Deposits of gray clay and loam indicative of such ore washing spotted the banks and shore areas of the pond in several trenches. (4) Sometime later the pond was converted into a racepond with water intake and tailrace connecting it to the Catoctin Furnaces by a raceway. The intake ditch was likely the one utilized later by Jacques with a new dam and input valve at its head. The excavation of the tailrace showed two levels of activity. The first level is associated with initial construction of the raceway (5) while the second level raised the raceway banks high on both sides to produce a channel that carried double the original load of water. This event is thought to be correlated with the development of a second blast furnace (Isabella) around 1856, whose water wheel (directly connected to the pond by the south-running raceway) required the additional water. The racepond was used in this way until 1893 when this additional furnace was decommissioned and the water wheel became an obsolete means by which to power the furnace (steam power had actually replaced water wheels at most furnaces by that period). No evidence of the wooden raceway was encountered, but it seems likely that it existed and its remains are buried in the pond muck somewhere in the vicinity. Such a feature must have post dated the ore mines (Jacques’ ponds) south of 18FR327. Post furnace activities included (6) the use of the pond in connection with Lanceolot Jacques’ developments, (7) and as a goldfish pond and presidential trout fishing pond. (8) It was used as an ice skating pond prior to being nearly covered by US Route 15 in 1961.

A small number of cultural items were recovered from the various test trenches at 18FR327. Most of the artifacts came from a shallow pit in the plateau to the north of the racepond area (between the pond and North Little Hunting Creek) that had been used as a refuse dump. Artifacts from the site include 45 redware sherds (17 brown glazed), 2 blue shell-edged pearlware sherds, 1 blue-on-white porcelain sherd, 16 whiteware/ironstone sherds, 1 light blue transfer-print rimsherd (post 1840), 1 domestic gray stoneware sherd, 1 stoneware sherd w/white exterior and dark brown interior (late 19th C.), 6 fragments of green medicine bottle with markings (2nd half 19th C.), 1 green bottle glass, 1 clear curved glass fragment, 1 peach pit, 1 horseshoe, 1 bolt, 1 piece of pig iron, 1 iron strap, 7 clear window glass fragments, 2 cut nails, at least 6 brick fragments, 6 rusted nails, 2 spikes, 8 iron fragments, at least 34 pieces of slag, 4 badly rusted objects, at least 18 charcoal fragments, and 60 small rock fragments.

Research at 18FR327 revealed information useful in interpreting one of the ancillary structures associated with the Catoctin Iron Furnace. This site played a role in the development of the furnace and then later was utilized in an important local industry (goldfish farming) and was visited by an important US President. The site has now been largely destroyed by the dualization of US Route 15. Thus, it has no remaining research potential.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005963, 00005972, 00005973